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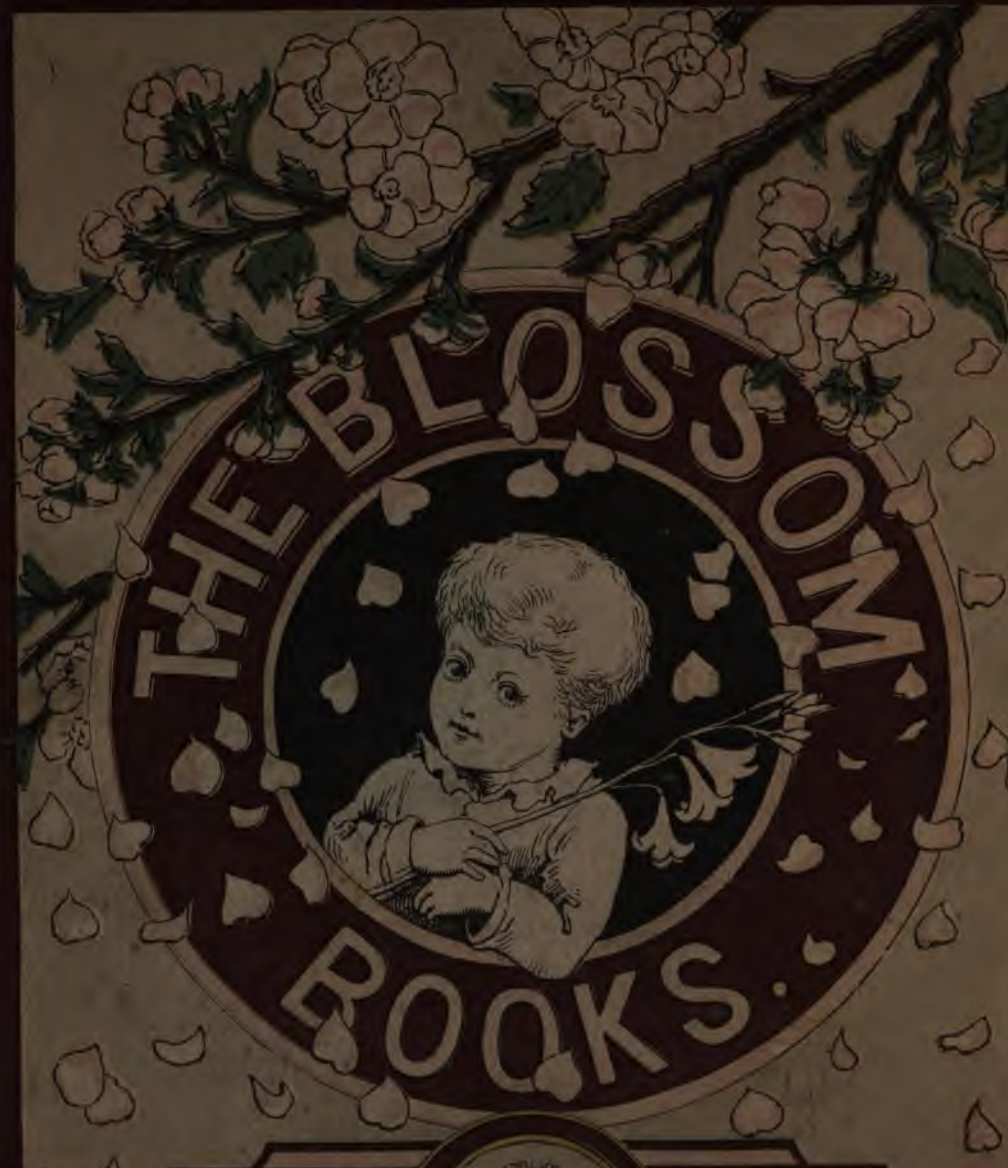
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THE BLOSSOM BOOKS.

NEW YORK:
PHILLIPS & HUNT,
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THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.



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Mrs. J. A. Dodd



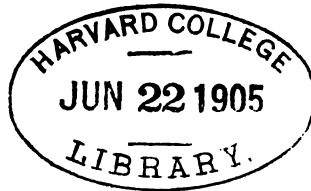


THE

Children's **H**our.



NEW YORK:
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1879.



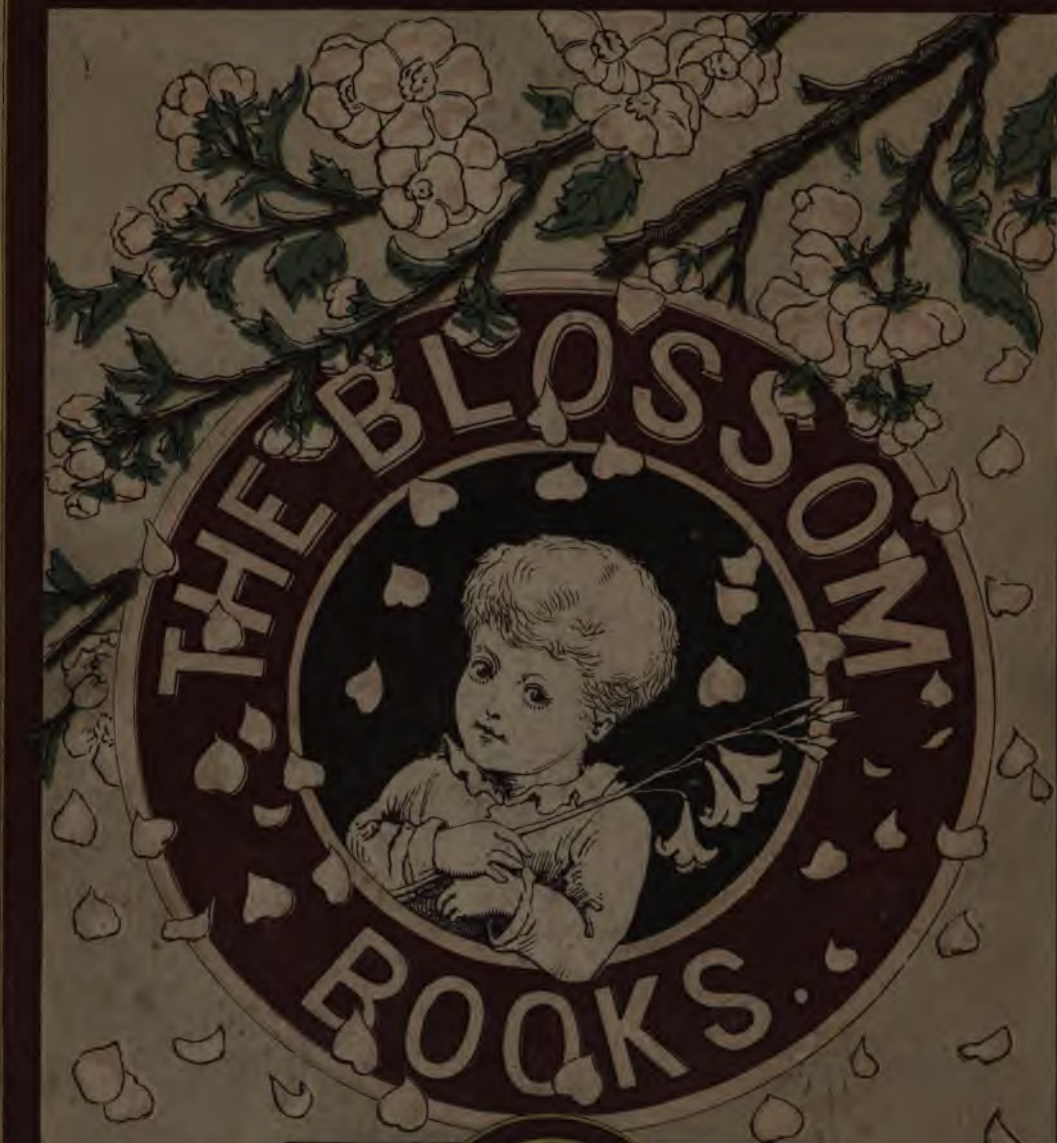
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THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

CHERRIES RIPE.



BUT on the air the sweet voice rings,
And this is the song the maiden sings:—

“Cherries are ripe,
Cherries are ripe;
The children shall have some.

“Cherries ripe are red and sweet,
Cherries ripe we love to eat;
Dear little child,
Be patient and mild,
And then you shall have some.”

This is the song the maiden sings,
While robin chirrups and folds his wings.





THE LINNET'S SONG.



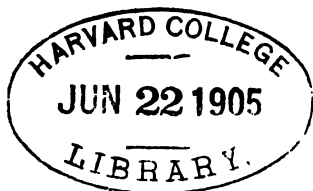
 I am so happy! so happy! the air is so sweet and fresh, the sky so blue, and every thing around me so bright and beautiful! Trill, trill! sure there never was a happier bird than I! My mate sits on her nest, all carefully hidden from sight in the bush beneath. A beautiful little nest it is, and we are very proud of it. We took a great deal of pains to make it neat and snug, forming it of grass, wool, and moss, and lining it with hair and feathers. In it are six little pale-blue eggs, spotted with brown. In a few days they will be hatched, and there will be a family of downy, chirping nestlings to look after; then I shall have plenty of work to do to find them food, and I shall be, if possible, even happier than I am now."

That is a sweet song, is it not? And its sweetest note is the glad and thankful spirit that runs through it all. So do we, dear children, have the sweet air, and the blue sky, and the bright flowers, and, best of all, the love of the dear Father in heaven, to make us glad and happy.



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HOWARD is fond of fishing, and will spend hours and hours waiting for a bite. Sometimes he forgets all about eating, and Jennie has to run down and tell him when meals are ready.

“Wait a minute, Jennie,” he will say, “just a minute, and then I’ll have a nice mess!”

Then he tells her some wonderful story he has read, or heard, or thought out in his own brain, and Jennie listens and listens until she forgets all about her errand, and like enough somebody has to be sent to hunt her up.

Howard sends the most of his fish to the people in the village near which he lives, and is trying to gather money enough to enable him to buy books and attend school during the winter months.

Fishing doesn’t seem stupid work to Howard, but it is to some people, for tastes differ, and what is sport to one is weariness to another. Sometime in the future Howard may stroll down to this little pond where he spent so many hours when he was a boy, and the very sight of it will recall pleasant thoughts, and help him to be a better man.





“**I** WONDER what people mean by saying that this one or that one leads a dog’s life?” said Ruth Wilbur. “I think dogs have a very easy sort of life indeed; they never have to go to school, or comb their own hair, or wash dishes, or do any of those disagreeable things. Don’t you wish you were a dog, Louise?”

“No,” said Louise; “I’ve seen dogs I felt real sorry for; when nobody spoke a kind word to them, but just kicked them about, and made them feel real bad, I know. I like dogs.”

“So do I,” said Ruth, “especially Ned. He’s a jolly good dog! Some dogs have to work for their living,” she added thoughtfully. “They churn, they guard sheep, they follow the chase, they watch their masters’ houses and goods. A dog’s life is a hard one when he is only kicked and cuffed, and never hears a kind word.”

“Then people must mean that one leads a dog’s life when no one is kind to him,” said Louise. “I don’t want to lead such a life.”

“Nor help any one else to,” said Ruth.



THE LITTLE WATCHER.



LITTLE Elsie knows just as well as if she were a clock what time her papa starts for home, and, whatever mamma may be doing at that time, she must pay attention to the little girl.

“Papa’s coming! me see papa! Up! up!” she says, and must be lifted to the window-sill, where she stands eagerly watching for the dear one’s return. How anxious she is! How she stretches forward in her impatience to bring him nearer! and how attentively she listens for his familiar footstep!

When at last papa turns the corner, and Elsie sees, perhaps, just the rim of his hat, she begins to crow and dance and jump about, so that mamma’s arms are hardly strong enough to keep the child from falling out of the window. And how glad papa is to see his little girl again! He tosses her in his arms, and rides her on his shoulder, and they have merry times! This is the song he sings:—

Away we go,
On our journey, so!

And home we run,
When our journey’s done!

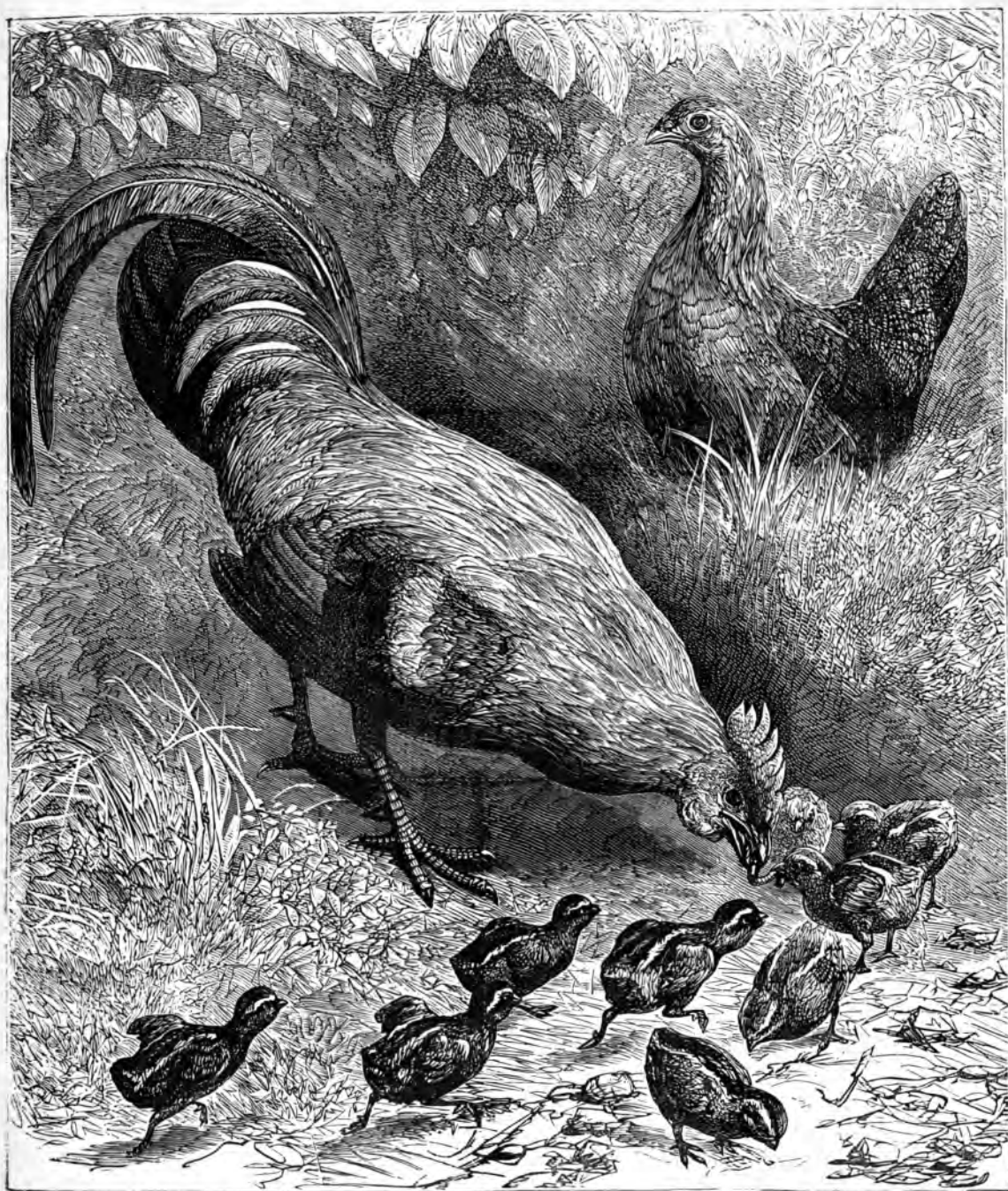


CHICK! CHICK!



EE how they run! Old Pap Rooster has a worm, and the little chicks have somehow or other found it out, and they all want it. There's hardly enough of it to feed them all, but there are other worms in the ground which can be brought to light by a little scratching. Chickens are pretty little creatures, and they seem to have a happy time of it; but they have their troubles too. Rats, cats, weasels, and other animals, are very fond of young chicks, and watch their chance to get them. It is not an easy matter to steal a chicken from under its mother's wings. Once in a while, however, there is some foolish little chick that does not mind when the mother calls. He hears the sharp "cluck! cluck! cluck!" but thinks there's time enough, or else he thinks there's no danger. Foolish little chicken! While he stops to pick up a worm, or to catch a fly, the big hawk comes flying down, and seizes him in its cruel beak, and takes him away off, and eats him up.

Chickens and children are best off when they mind their mother.





READING.



“**A**ND so you do not like to spell,
Mary, my dear? O, very well:
'Tis dull and troublesome, you say,
And you would rather be at play.

“So, as you wish to be a dunce,
Pray, go and fetch your books at once;
For if you will not learn to spell,
'Tis vain to think of reading well.

“Do you not think you'll blush to own,
When you become a woman grown,
Without one good excuse to plead,
That you have never learned to read?”

“O, grandmother,” said Mary then,
“Do let me have my books again;
I'll not fret any more indeed,
If you will let me learn to read.”



THE UNWELCOME VISITOR.



LITTLE squirrel went up a tree in search of nuts and other good things to eat, and, quite unexpectedly, came across a black-bird which was sitting on a nest full of eggs.

"He wants my eggs, I know he does!" she whispered to herself; "but I'll let him know whom he has to deal with! Caw! caw!"

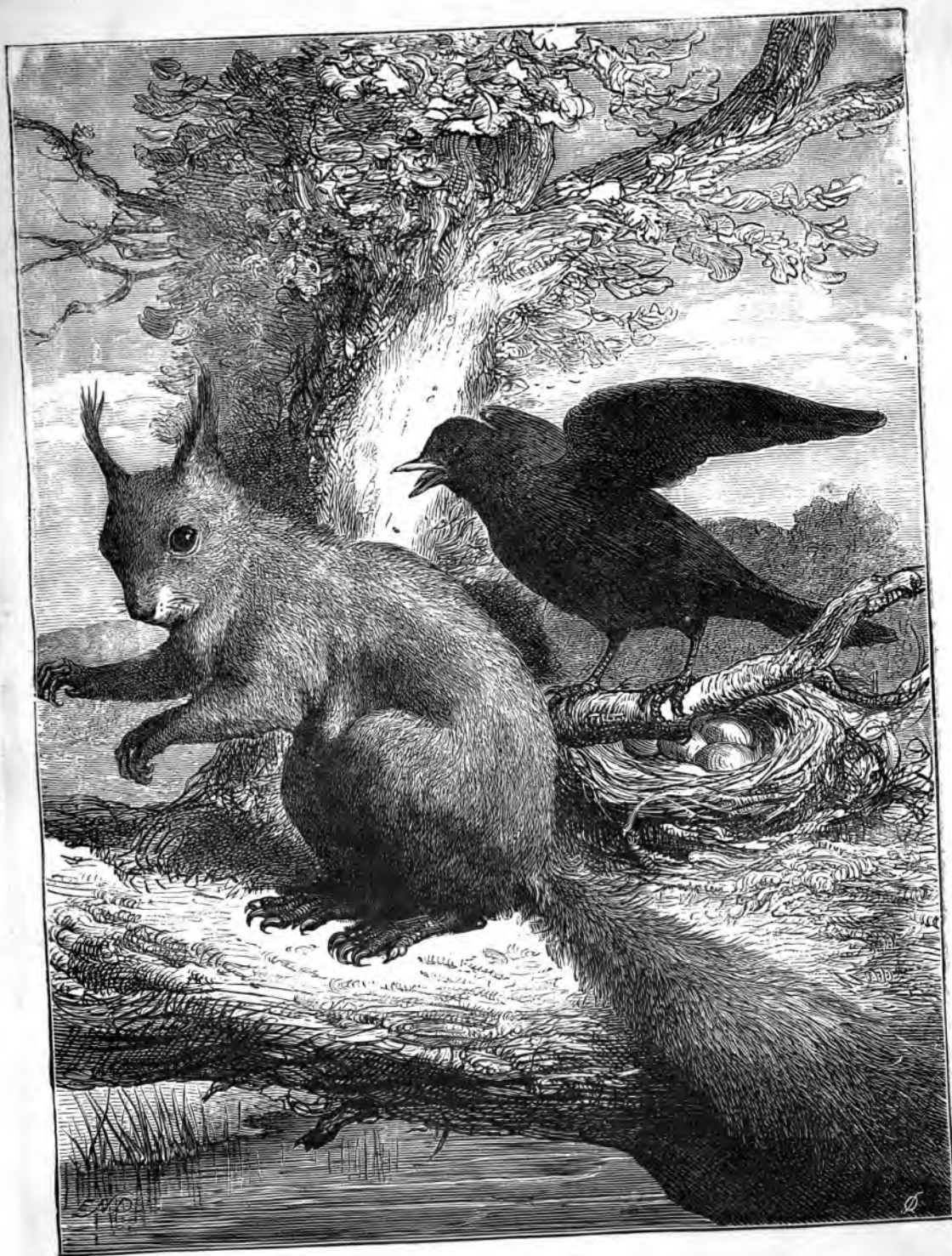
But the squirrel wasn't a bit frightened, and only cocked up his ears and twisted his head one side, as much as to say, "I'm a match for you!"

"Caw! caw!" said Mrs. Crow again, and now she rose up and—O dear me!—it wasn't—yes, it was Mrs. Crow!—but so angry that she seemed almost as big as an eagle.

She scolded like a fury, and flapped her wings so that Mr. Squirrel kept winking and blinking, expecting every minute she would pounce upon him.

"Dear me, how savage!" said Mr. Squirrel; "I guess I would better go home and see what my little ones are doing."

Then how Mrs. Crow laughed! if a crow can laugh. What do you think about it?



OUR JACKDAW.



ONCE possessed an intelligent Jackdaw; he knew us all well, but would have nothing to say to strangers. His favorite attitude was standing on one leg with one eye shut; and woe-betide the cat which thought to make a meal of him, and approached stealthily toward him for that purpose. He never waited to be attacked; up would go his wings with every indication of battle, and off would dart the cat, glad to get away from so pugnacious a bird. Jack's special favorite was a fat little guinea-pig, with which he positively played hide-and-seek among the flowers, much to our amusement, as the pig appeared to enjoy it as much as the bird. Jack at last became so familiar with every thing going on in the house that when Nora made the puddings or pies Jack was sure to be found there, waiting for his share. We all had a decided aversion to cutting his wing in order to prevent his flying away, as we thought it cruel; so we decided to allow him his liberty, and for many weeks after he paid visits to us, but would never allow us to approach too near him.





WID you ever get a valentine? your very, very own? that no one had a right to but just yourself alone. Mine is a bufile beauty; when the postman rang the bell, I knew he'd something nice for me. I knew it just as well as if he'd read my name out loud and held it up to see. It only had this one sweet line, that my own mamma read: "I love you, dear, with all my heart," and that was all it said. But something close beside my arm kept still repeating o'er: "I love you, dear, with all my heart, to Miss Eugenia Moore."

I wonder who can love me like that? It cannot be old Captain Brown, or Mrs. Mink, who often comes to tea; nor Charley Townsend; maybe 'twas that darling Bessie Bliss; but then she hasn't got a heart, I'm sure, as big as this!

I know! I guessed it all myself! I might have known before that mamma sent this valentine to Miss Eugenia Moore; for she's the only one I know who says, and means it, too,

"I love you, dear, with all my heart," and, mamma, I love you!





“**M**INNIE,” said Uncle Ned, “would you like to know about some strange things which parrots have done?”

Down went the apples from the white apron as Minnie rushed to her uncle’s lap. A story was her great delight.

“Once a parrot was brought from Guinea to a boy in America, and during the journey it was taken care of by an old sailor who had a rough voice and a cough, which the parrot soon copied. It became very much attached to the man, and long after they were separated, and Polly had come into possession of the little boy, it would still talk and cough just as the old sailor did.

“There was another parrot,” said Uncle Ned, “which was a great pet of an old gentleman who was an invalid, always suffering much pain. He heard the old man say so often, ‘I am ill,’ that if any one said, ‘Polly, how do you do?’ he would answer in mournful tones, ‘I am ill,’ and then stretch himself upon the floor groaning, ‘I am ill ! I am ill !’”





SQUIB AND THE FEATHER.



SQUIB is a black-and-tan terrier, with a smooth, glossy coat. Within a short walk of the house where he belongs there is a large mill-pond, on which are a number of swans and small water-fowl. It is the custom of swans to plume themselves, and this pluming brings a good many of their beautiful feathers to the edge of the water. Having often tried to get some of these, Winifred one day thought of asking Squib, by signs as well as words, to get one out for her, and this he did again and again successfully. Upon one occasion she slyly pushed him in just as he was getting the feather. He did not forget this, as she afterward found out. Some months after, when she asked him to get a feather out, he refused, and stood barking at the feather, and no persuasions could get him near the water. She walked on, thinking she must give up her feather, but presently she heard a pattering of feet, and, looking round, she saw Squib with the feather in his mouth. He had waited until the girl was at a safe distance, not wishing to run the risk of another wetting.



MARY AND PUSSY.



MARY was stroking Pussy's fur,
And Pussy soon began to purr,
And showed the bliss she seemed to feel,
By humming like a spinning-wheel,
"Thre-e-e thrum-m-m, thre-e-e thrum-m-m!"
Such a low and mellow hum!

But Mary's kind ways sometimes fail.
One day she pulled poor Pussy's tail;
Then Pussy growled and bared her claws;
Mary felt "sarp tings" in those paws.
"Gr-r-rrr! pfuff! me-ow!"
Scratch! Ah! there, now!

That is the way things go in life;
Kindness wins songs, roughness meets strife.
Better be good to every one,
And miss the "sharp things" said or done.
Purring is better than growling;
Smiling is better than scowling.



RIDING TO PASTURE.



LAZY boy! Are you not ashamed for him, to see him ride that poor, tired looking calf? But that is just like Dick Dingle. He never means to carry any thing, not even himself, when he can help it. He will even make little sister Hattie carry the dinner-basket to school, and if she complains, as she sometimes does, he will promise her the biggest piece of cake for carrying it. Of course she doesn't get it; you may be sure of that, for lazy people are always selfish.

Dick will not try to ride a *colt* again very soon. He tried it once, and the colt stood very still until Dick was all nicely fixed on his back; then he gave one leap and ran, and very soon tossed poor Dick off his back. Down he rolled into a ditch, and when he came out he was very wet and very much ashamed; but then he was not much hurt. After this he had to walk to the pasture. His father would not let him ride one of the cows, but now that the calf has grown larger, Dick thinks that he will not walk any longer.

Look out, Dick, the calf may lose its patience!



THE LITTLE STREET SWEEPER.



“**A**LL day I work in the busy street;
Nobody cares for me; none that I meet
Give me a smile or a word of cheer;
I’ve nothing to love, and the world is drear.”

A little street sweeper, that was all,
But her heart beat warm ’neath her tattered shawl,
And it yearned for love as she walked along,
Humming the lines of a rough street song.

Suddenly out from the restless throng
A stranger dog came running along;
He paused where the little girl reclined,
And, laying his head in her lap, low whined.

She clasped him close with her bare, brown arm,
And hugged him up to her heart, so warm;
Then he licked the tears from her wee, sad face,
And snuggled down in his resting-place.

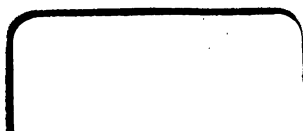




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